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**COMMISSIONER GEOFFREY STARKS
APPLAUDS \$7 BILLION IN E-RATE DISTANCE LEARNING
FUNDING IN RELIEF PACKAGE**

WASHINGTON, March 10, 2021—Today, the House passed a coronavirus relief package that includes more than \$7 billion in funding for the E-Rate program to support emergency broadband connectivity and devices for schools and libraries and their students, staff, and patrons. President Biden is expected to quickly sign the bill. In response, Commissioner Starks issued the following statement:

“A few weeks ago, I met with Detroit middle school students to talk about their online learning experience. They told me that a large share of their classmates cannot participate, and many have quit virtual learning out of frustration with slow broadband speeds and inadequate devices. Those students are not alone. An estimated 12 million students remain locked out of the virtual classroom. This relief package’s \$7 billion investment in emergency connectivity will help ensure that all students can continue learning and growing. I thank Senators Ed Markey, Maria Cantwell, Chris Van Hollen, Michael Bennet, Maggie Hassan, and Congresswoman Grace Meng for their leadership and commitment to securing this vital funding.”

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